(b) if so, whether the Commission would be headed jointly with the Ministry of Finance;

(c) whether the objective is to plug gaps in healthcare facilities and also to work towards making India the healthcare hub of the region;

(d) if so, the other objectives of this Commission; and

(e) the extent of its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The National Commission on Macro Economics and Health, under the joint chair of Union Health and Family Welfare and Finance Ministers, has been recently constituted. The objective of this Commission will be to broadly assess the impact of increased investment in the health sector on poverty reduction as also the overall economic development of India. More specifically, this would involve establishing epidemiological base line operations and targets thereof in order to formulate a long-term programme for scaling up essential health interventions, with the focus on the poor.

Essentiality Certificate for New Medical and Dental Colleges

2038. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR.T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has held while disposing off a batch of appeals challenging a judgment of Andhra Pradesh High Court that States have jurisdiction to grant essentiality certificates to an institution for setting up medical and dental colleges but this power should be exercised in a reasonable manner; and

(b) if so, to what extent this has been welcomed by the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central Government is not aware of the reaction of the State Government.

Health project to improve life span of women

2039. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have launched a health project to improve the life span of women and bring down the high rate of infant mortality in Orissa; if so, the details of the project;

(b) whether under this project it is also proposed to improve literacy rate among women; and

(c) the progress achieved in its implementation till date?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) The reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme, which aims at bringing down infant and maternal mortality and improving the health status of young children and pregnant women, has been under implementation since Oct., 1997 in all States of the country including Orissa. The interventions which focus on bringing down infant mortality include immunization against six vaccine preventable disease, essential new born care, control of deaths due to diarrhoea and pneumonia, prophylaxis of Vitamin-A deficiency and promotion of exclusive breast feeding. The interventions focused on pregnant women include, essential obstetric care promotion of institutional and safe deliveries, provision of emergency obstetric care and referral transportation for women, from indegent families requiring emergency care.